

Sunday, December 6 – Advent 2



## Gathering

Welcome

Prelude

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,  
whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever. **Amen**

With hearts anticipating God's incarnation, we make preparation by confessing our sin:

*A moment for silent reflection.*

Loving and forgiving God,  
**we confess that we are held captive by sin.**  
**In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.**  
**We have not welcomed the stranger;**  
**we have not loved our neighbour;**

**we have not been Christ to one another.  
Restore us, O God.  
Wake us up and turn us from our sin.  
Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen**

People of God, hear this glad news:  
by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free – free from all that holds you back, and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, + comforted in the peace of Christ, and accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

## **Gathering Song**      *"Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"*    # 254

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,  
dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.
2. Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a King;  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

## **Greeting**

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## **Lighting the Advent Wreath**

(Written by Pastor Sue Nevile)

- L: Peace on earth!  
A: Peace be with you!  
L: Peace is it's own reward!  
A: Blessed are the peacemakers!  
L: Today we light the candle of peace  
A: As we gather today, let us remember the places in the world that are not experiencing peace and give thanks for the peace with which we are blessed.  
L: Advent is a time of preparation. Peace is perhaps the most difficult thing to prepare in our lives. As we get ready for Christmas and the coming of the Christ child there are bright lights, decorations, shopping sprees, line ups, weather changes, family gatherings, parties and the many, many songs played over and over on the radio. It can be tempting to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations.

- A: And those things can be exciting... and exhausting.
- L: Let us be the voice that cries out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord!
- A: Help us prepare by looking for and living peaceful lives.
- P: Let us pray: Merciful God, look upon your people with kindness and favour. Guide us on our journey towards the night of Jesus' birth. Help us to prepare the way of the Lord in our hearts and in our lives. With peace guiding our days and hope lifting up our hearts we worship you. In Christ's name we pray. **Amen**

### **Candle Lighting Song** (Sung to the tune of Away in A Manger)

*(The Assisting Minister lights the first candle while the first verse is sung.)*

A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright,  
 A candle of HOPE in winter's long night.  
 While angels sing blessings from heaven's starry sky  
 Our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.

*(The Assisting Minister lights the second candle while the second verse is sung.)*

A candle is burning a candle of PEACE;  
 A candle to signal that conflict must cease;  
 For Jesus is coming to show us the way;  
 A message of peace humbly laid in the hay.

*Words: Sandra Dean, 1986*

- L: *For most of the 6<sup>th</sup> century before Christ the Jews lived in exile in Babylon. The prophet announces to them that their exile is over, and that God will care for them as a shepherd cares for the sheep.*

### **A reading from the prophet Isaiah, the 40<sup>th</sup> chapter.**

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term,  
 that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries out:

'In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,  
 make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;  
 the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together,  
 for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.'

<sup>6</sup> A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?'  
All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field.  
<sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.  
<sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand for ever.  
<sup>9</sup> Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!'  
<sup>10</sup> See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.  
<sup>11</sup> He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Word of God. Word of Life.  
**Thanks be to God!**

### **Gospel Acclamation** (*sung together*)

*page 142*

Alleluia, Lord to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

### **Gospel**

**P:** The holy gospel according to Mark, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup> As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,  
'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;  
<sup>3</sup> the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
"Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight" ',

<sup>4</sup> John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He proclaimed, 'The one who is more powerful than I is coming after

me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon

### Hymn of the Day "Comfort, Comfort Now My People" # 256

1. "Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow's load.  
To God's people now proclaim that God's pardon waits for them!  
Tell them that their war is over; God will reign in peace forever.
2. For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near,  
calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here.  
Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way.  
Valleys, rise to greet the Savior; hills, bow down in humble favor.
3. Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain.  
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits God's holy reign.  
For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad,  
and all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

## Prayers

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

**P:** Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord who teaches us to pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

## Sharing of the Peace

# **Sending**

*Announcements may be made.*

## Benediction

(Written by Pastor Katharine Gohm)

**P:** May God, for whom nothing is impossible  
restore you and bless you.

May Christ, in whom is the dawning of grace,  
carry you and gently lead you.

May the Spirit, whose song is gladness,  
fill you with peace and comfort. **Amen**

## Sending Hymn     *“Fling Wide the Door”*     # 259

1. Fling wide the door, unbar the gate; the King of glory comes in state;  
the Lord of lords, the King of kings, the saviour of the world who brings  
his great salvation to the earth. So raise a shout of holy mirth  
and praise our God and Lord, Creator, Spirit, Word.
2. O happy towns and blessed lands that live by their true king’s commands.  
And blessed be the hearts he rules, the humble places where he dwells.  
He is the rightful Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his.  
Creator of the world, our only strength for good.
3. Come, Lord, our Saviour, Jesus Christ; our hearts are open wide in trust.  
O, show us now your lovely grace, upon our sorrows shine your face,  
and let your Holy spirit guide our journey in your grace so wide.  
We praise your holy name, from age to age the same!

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## Dismissal

**A:** Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God!**